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Mark Your Calendar

*Next Work Group Meeting:
Thursday February 28th
The Maxwell Inn
From 6 to 8 PM*

East Park RMP/EA

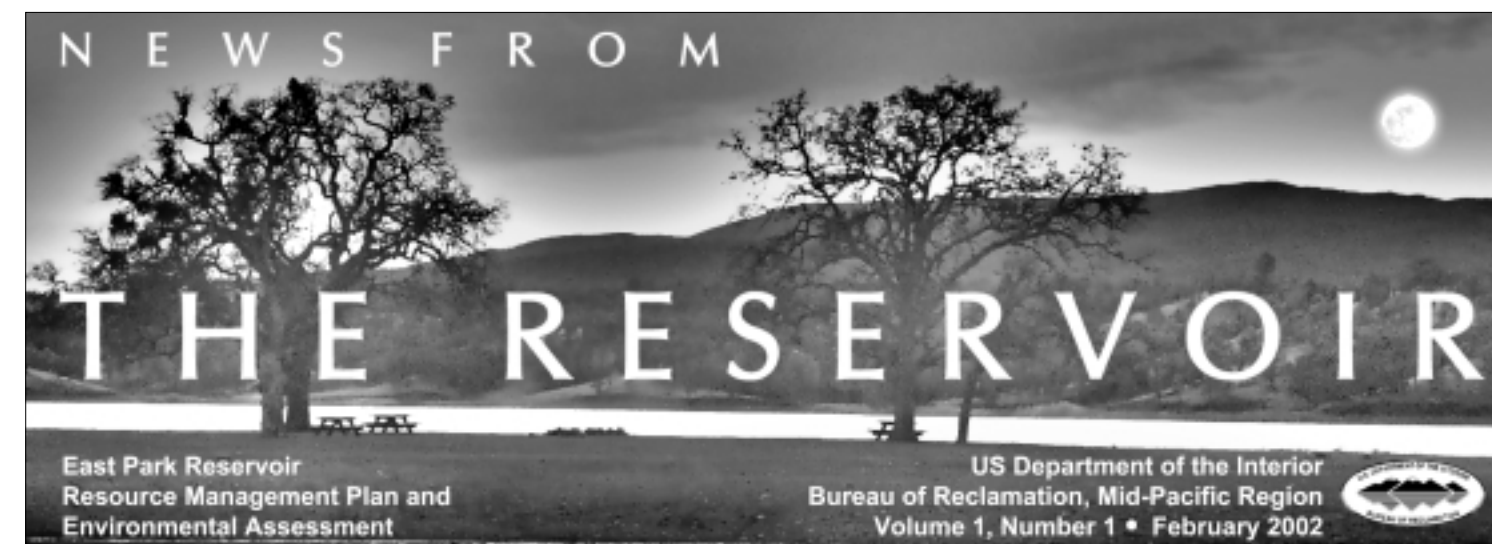
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February 2002

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**Acting as contracted agent for the Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Pacific Region*



EAST PARK RESERVOIR RMP PLANNING PROCESS BEGINS

Welcome to the first issue of *News from the Reservoir*—the monthly newsletter to keep you informed as we develop an issue-driven resource management plan (RMP) for the 4,098 acres of land and water at East Park Reservoir in Colusa County, California.

Please join us in the planning process for East Park, whose facilities have been underdeveloped and overused. The Bureau of Reclamation's goal is to implement optimum—rather than maximum—recreational development, protect resources while providing visitors with a low-density recreational experience and benefiting the local economy.

Public involvement is a critical element in developing the RMP. Reclamation's goal is to gain input from a cross section of the user public. Over a period of eight to ten months, Reclamation will hold monthly work group meetings and two open houses. It will further involve and inform the public with mailings, such as this newsletter. We will use the information collected from these sources, along with site information gathered through the planning process, to develop the final planning proposals. Public input and participation will help assure that the RMP will meet the needs of interested parties, while

providing for development and management of the reservoir and the area's resources.

East Park Dam, which forms East Park Reservoir, is part of the Orland Project. Completed in 1910, the dam was authorized under the Reclamation Act of June 17,

enough water to supply over 52,000 households with water for a year. There are 25 miles of shoreline around the reservoir, ten miles of which are available for recreation which includes camping, swimming, bird watching, fishing, and hang gliding.

To insure that all views are heard, your participation in the planning process is important. We welcome your comments and input. Please feel free to contact us at the addresses listed on the back of this newsletter. Dates and locations of open houses for the project will be included in future newsletters.

In conjunction with the RMP, Reclamation will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) to assess possible environmental and social effects of different management alternatives selected for East Park. A preliminary list of key issues to be addressed in the RMP and EA include expanding East Park's access by extending the season of use (presently, it is open from approximately April to late September).

We also will consider overuse of the park and its visitor capacity, road and facility maintenance and improvements, wetlands preservation, wildlife management and tricolored blackbird protection, law enforcement needs, livestock grazing, and day-use charges.



1902, and stores irrigation waters diverted and impounded from Stony Creek, Little Stony Creek, Squaw Creek, and Little Indian Creek. East Park Reservoir measures 2.7 miles in length and encompasses an area of 1,820 acres. The reservoir has a total water capacity of 52,000 acre-feet, which is

WORK GROUP IS KEY TO THE PLANNING PROCESS

A work group representing interested stakeholders has been organized to identify issues and concerns and to provide input regarding alternatives for the RMP. The work group consists of one representative from each interested user group—including recreation users, land and business owners, hang gliders, anglers, bird watchers, and agencies. This work group will meet monthly for eight to ten months, or longer if necessary, to identify and discuss issues related to the RMP and its planning process. The small work group will help minimize conflicts, while encouraging steady progress on issues associated with the RMP. Representatives participating



in the work group then will report back to their members and bring any concerns or suggestions to the next scheduled work group meeting.

Highlights of the January Work Group Meeting

The first work group meeting was a success—approximately 30 people attended the meeting, which was held at the Maxwell Inn on January 31.

Staff from Tetra Tech (Reclamation’s contractor for the RMP) moderated the evening’s discussion. Attendees introduced themselves and shared the issues that



concerned them. Work group members agreed to keep the meeting day and time as the last Thursday of every month, from 6 to 8 PM.

Once introductions were complete, those at the meeting got to work on the issues affecting East Park. One of the main issues discussed was a need for increased law enforcement to handle the large crowds and the associated noise. Work group members supported the idea of charging a day-use fee to help alleviate crowds, and to increase the quality of the East Park experience.

Work group members also discussed expanding the reservoir’s season of use

and upgrading roads; maintaining one side of the reservoir as an undeveloped, more natural area and developing the other side as a campground; and developing campsites in general with hopes of reducing overcrowding at the various campsite areas.

Other topics of discussion included the presence of elk and their effects on the vegetation, increased sedimentation at the south end of the reservoir and in Indian Creek, the history of hang gliding at the reservoir, and potential construction of the Sites Reservoir and its potential effects on East Park.

A contact list of the work group members will be handed out at the next meeting.

Future editions of this newsletter will include more in-depth coverage of work group meetings and action items. If you would like additional information on this or upcoming work group meetings, please call Dennis Kearney of Tetra Tech at (415) 974-1221 or e-mail him at dennis.kearney@tetrattech.com.

RECLAMATION’S MISSION FOR THE RMP PROCESS

“Reclamation will offer meaningful opportunities for participation in decision-making processes leading to actions and policies which may significantly affect or interest the public. Reclamation will involve the public in the decision process and document that involvement.”

THE GOALS FOR EAST PARK RESERVOIR

- Manage, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat and natural, cultural, and recreational resources
- Preserve the aesthetic quality and natural environment
- Promote the safe and healthful use of the reservoir’s lands and waters
- Strengthen the local economy through expanding the services and season of the reservoir’s use

Nine-Step Resource Management Planning Process

1 *Identifying Issues, Concerns, Opportunities, and Constraints.*

Reclamation will identify issues and concerns through monthly work group meetings and public open house meetings. The input that we receive will help us develop the goals and objectives for the RMP.

2 *Developing Planning Criteria.*

Planning criteria are meant to ensure that the decisions made will address the important planning issues for East Park. These criteria will help the planning team to formulate and select combinations of land uses and management actions that should be considered in the RMP.

3 *Inventory Data and Information Collection.*

We’ll use the planning criteria to collect data and information for the resources in the planning area. These resources include the park’s physical and biological resources, including water, soils, vegetation, fish and wildlife, and

its cultural and recreational resources.

4 *Goals and Objectives Development.*

Reclamation will draft resource-specific management goals and objectives for managing the natural resources at East Park and to provide for continued recreation that is in balance with the areas resources.

5 *Formulation of Alternatives.*

A range of reasonable management alternatives will address issues identified during the planning process and from public scoping. For example, two possible alternatives are to expand the current season of use and to develop all or none of the campsites.

6 *Evaluation of Alternatives.*

We’ll estimate and evaluate the effects of each alternative as part of the environmental assessment.

7 *Selection of Preferred Alternative.*

The preferred alternative is the one that best resolves planning issues.

8 *Preparation of Resource Management Plan.*

After we have analyzed the alternatives, Reclamation will issue a draft RMP/EA, which will be available to the public for a review period of 30 to 45 calendar days. After we have received and analyzed comments to the draft document, we will modify the RMP/EA to take into account public comments. Then we will publish the proposed final RMP/EA for public review for 30 to 45 calendar days. Finally, a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) is signed to approve the RMP/EA.

9 *Implementation and Monitoring of RMP.*

The management measures outlined in the approved plan will be implemented and monitored to test their effectiveness. Changes will be made as necessary to achieve desired results.